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	Page
Reforestation in Land Use	Leon S. Minckler 3
Farming in Alaska	Stanley L. Balloun 9
Seeds for the World	W. A. Wheeler 14
Economic Control and Credit . . .	Donald C. Horton 17
Elderly Farmers: Youth and Veterans . .	Paul A. Eke 23
SOS from South Africa	H. H. Bennett 27
"Smoke Gets in Your Eyes"	Charles E. Gage 31
Denmark's Family Farms	Elizabeth R. Hooker 34
Books . . .	Eric Englund, Clara Bailey, Harold Hedges, Montell Ogdon, Helen W. Atwater, O. V. Wells

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS



Contributors

Editorial Note: OUR SUMMER NUMBER carries its readers into the forests, on to Alaska, and to other far countries and most of the other articles are shorter than usual for hot-weather perusal. But we cannot escape the problems if we would, so they too find place throughout these pages.

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Reforestation in Land Use: GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

By LEON S. MINCKLER. *Apparently this is about the first time that just this kind of material has been brought together with major emphasis on land use. It makes a forward-looking but practical article that will have value for a long time to come.*



THE AMOUNT of idle land in this country is not known with certainty.

But no one denies that there is a large acreage of land of latent value now virtually unused and other large tracts of marginal and submarginal land still under cultivation. Furthermore, there is now general agreement that the existing soil-site conditions impose definite limitations on types of land use that are suitable to a given area.

Estimates of our potentially productive land are found here and there. The so-called Copeland Report, *A National Plan for American Forestry*, issued as a Senate document in 1933, mentions 135 million acres. Allied estimates are interesting—the National Resources Planning Board, for instance, proposed a forest-planting program to cover 32 million acres, mostly east of the Mississippi River. The great wartime increase in sales value of all types of forest products has led to

much closer cutting and utilization of the smaller trees. Some of the area cut over in this way will not restock satisfactorily to the more desirable species. A program of good land use will require that these new problem areas be considered for forest rehabilitation, and partial planting is one alternative. The exact acreage of all problem areas is not important. It would undoubtedly be very large.

Reforestation is one treatment that is well adapted to a wise and ecologically sound and harmonious land-use policy. It should be considered in comparison with other land-use and rehabilitation practices and final decisions should be based on the facts of site capability, although with the realization that economic expediency may modify the best of plans. Too often the background, position, or preferences of the land planners have exerted undue influence on the final decisions.

In a natural forest region the best equilibrium between the forces of nature occurs when the vegetation is climax-type forest; that is, when the forest is one that, for a given natural environment, has reached a final stage in succession and will thereafter maintain itself with little change. At that point there is a harmonious balance between vegetation, rainfall, soil profile, and soil water. Rainfall then gives maximum benefit to vegetation because the conditions of soil and soil-profile are ideal for maximum water storage and for minimum run-off. This expedites plant development which in turn maintains a favorable water economy for the region.

From the standpoint of nature the climax-type vegetation is good land use. From the standpoint of man this is seldom true. Managed forests are usually not climax types. Man's idea is to obtain the maximum amount of plant products in their most usable form.

Nature's Harmony

This ecological concept of nature's harmony, however, is very useful to the land manager. It gives him a reference point by which he can learn how much his used (or misused) soil profile has deteriorated. It suggests to him one method by which the soil profile can be restored and perhaps the only method by which detention storage of water can be fully maintained.

Starting with an abandoned unproductive old field there are perhaps five possible courses of action. Each would be good land-use practice on some sites and under some

conditions. Just as surely each would be bad land use under other circumstances.

Alternatives

Going from the least intensive to the most intensive land-use practice the five alternatives for our hypothetical old field are as follows: (1) Do nothing; this is perhaps the most widely practiced. (2) Do nothing, but turn in the livestock; it would then be wild or unimproved pasture. (3) Reforest the field by planting, seeding, encouragement of natural reforestation, or a combination of these methods. (4) Make an improved or permanent pasture at a rather large initial cost per acre. (5) Rehabilitate the land by agronomic techniques and eventually return it to agricultural uses.

In choosing among these alternatives those who work on land problems need to distinguish between technical possibilities and probable economic returns. The roles of topographic, soil-site, silvicultural, watershed, and economic factors are now rather generally known. Much information regarding them is procurable. So far as human frailty will permit, any decisions should be built on these facts, letting the chips fall where they fall.

Reforestation Policy

To dispel any lingering misconceptions it should be pointed out at once that wood is a salable crop, a crop that will always have a value, and one for which new and almost sensational uses are continually being found. No forest owner should fear that his crop may have to rot

on the stump. If markets are low today they may be high tomorrow. This crop will keep.

But one of the hardest problems the land planner faces is compounded of the real or imagined necessities and economies of the individual landowner which impose definite limitations on improved practices. Reforestation of a given field might obviously give the greatest return and the greatest land values in a 50- or 100-year period, yet the owner believes he must continue to gain some small yearly income by expending himself and his soil capital. Compromise and expediency will continue to be necessary.

No Cure-All

Some sections of the general public and possibly some foresters seem to believe that tree planting is a cure-all. It isn't. It has been done when other practices would have been superior. Many failures have occurred. Many plantations will not accomplish what they were intended to accomplish. Too much reforestation has been haphazard and ill-planned. These mistakes are being corrected but when all mistakes are corrected, tree planting still will not be a cure-all. But it does have a proper and an important place in land-use practice.

Where and When

Where, then, should reforestation be done? In general, reforestation is a good land-use practice if: (1) the decreasing of high run-off, caused by the relatively low detention storage in agricultural and pas-

FAITH

*With the faith of our fathers
in our hearts, we fear no future.*

—HARRY S. TRUMAN

ture soil profiles, is important; (2) the land is not level enough and naturally fertile enough for agroeconomic techniques to be employed successfully in arable uses; (3) permanent pasture is not a wise use because of the steepness, roughness, lack of required soil fertility, erosion, or other site conditions; (4) the site is not one of the few favored areas where natural or unimproved pasture is really successful; and (5) the site will not reseed naturally and fully to desirable tree species. If this situation prevails, the proper land use is to reforest by planting the right species or mixture of species in the right way.

Choice

Choosing such alternatives is not always easy. Expediency and immediate economic needs of the landowner may loom large in proportion to their real importance in a long-range program of proper land use. In respect to the long-time economic values, land does its best work when that work is in harmony with its natural characteristics. Difficulties of change-over and adjustments are not forgotten, but it is perhaps wiser for man to adapt himself to the land's capacity to produce

than to impose a land-use pattern that conforms to his particular preferences.

Before Proceeding

After the war there will probably be a very large increase in forest planting. This planting should be done properly and should be guided in the right direction. Planting particular tree species on the wrong site is usually valueless and always wasteful.

A tree planter should be conscious of the complete soil-site complex. The picture beneath the soil surface combined with what he sees above it should be paramount in his mind. Foresters have sometimes sinned against the land in this respect. More information and a fuller use of existing knowledge are needed. The general principles of successful reforestation, as outlined below, should be made applicable to specific cases in a specific way. A good start has been made but additional study is necessary.

Reforestation Guide

The following principles are suggested as a guide to sounder and more successful reforestation policy and practice.

(1) The source of the seed of the plantation should be in the same physiographic and climatic region as the plantation. Definite limits of tolerance have been experimentally determined in only a few cases. The existence of regional or climatic strains within species is established, however, and any tree planter who ignores this fact makes a grave mistake. The mistake is intensified by the fact that many years must

usually elapse before it is fully evident.

(2) Reforestation should be confined to native species within their own ranges unless it has been demonstrated that exotics can be successfully used for some particular purpose. In spite of this axiom, the original species on a given old-field site are not necessarily good guides for planting. Most abandoned old fields have been subjected to years of depletion and erosion. The soil profile, structure, and consistency have been changed and the amount of organic matter greatly reduced. The accompanying decrease in soil porosity diminishes the rate of water percolation, amount of detention water storage, and soil aeration. The change in total site value between the original forest and the old field is usually tremendous. This is a well-known but often ill-remembered truth.

Demonstration

(3) Planting should be done on the basis of species adaptation to soil-site conditions, that is, the complex of soil, topography, history, and vegetation. A series of 700 experimental plantations in the Great Appalachian Valley in eastern Tennessee is showing the importance of this. Among the soil factors of the site which influence the choice of species are: nature of soil profile, physical character of soil, history and degree of erosion, topography and aspect, and vegetation type and density. Insofar as soil type is correlated with these characteristics, it too can be used as a planting guide. Trees, in general, differ from agricultural crops and pasture in their requirements as to site. Trees do not re-

Interplay

Conflicts of ideologies with respect to individual, State, or Federal interests and responsibilities inevitably make it difficult for people to view problems and cures objectively . . . But in a democracy the interplay of diverse philosophies has compensating value.

—LYLE F. WATTS

quire a fertile soil so much as a soil that has plenty of root space. A soil optimum for tree growth, especially for the hardwoods, is characterized by a deep profile with a loose, friable structure and high porosity. Such soil has good aeration and percolation, high capacity for detention and retention of water, and opportunity for deep root expansion.

Whole Profile

Trees respond to fertility, as such, but the physical character of the whole profile is usually more influential. The selection of species to be planted depends on the degree to which these desirable characteristics of the soil profile are present. The choice ranges all the way from the demanding black walnut and yellow-poplar to the shortleaf pine and red cedar which are so tolerant of poor sites.

Planting

(4) Planting proper mixtures of species is preferable to pure plantations. Pure plantings are usually ecologically unnatural and they often show defective development in

middle life. Pure planting is usually necessary, however, on a depleted site that is well adapted to only one species. This is usually a pioneer species, such as shortleaf pine, which does grow rather well in pure stands and which improves the site for the gradual penetration of other species, notably hardwoods.

The planting of mixtures should be guided by the following general rules: (a) all species in the mixture should be adapted to the site; (b) the species should have about the same growth rate on the particular site—that is, mixtures should be compatible; (c) the mixture should be in a checkerboard pattern with groups of 9, 16, or possibly 25 trees of each species; (d) because of the danger of great differences in survival and early growth, mixtures of direct-seeded species and planted species should usually be avoided; and (e) mixtures should usually consist of both conifers and hardwoods.

Watch Out

(5) Presence of some volunteer young growth on the planting site may be an advantage. Undesirable,

brushy species act as site improvers and "trainers" for the planted trees. The planted trees should be placed only in the openings between the volunteer growth; thus the number of trees planted per acre and the corresponding cost are greatly reduced. Planted trees will be suppressed if the volunteer growth is too dense or too high; this calls for on-the-spot decision by a technician.

(6) The method of preparing the site depends upon topography and roughness of land and the nature of the cover and soil. Where power machinery can be used the cost of planting can be greatly reduced. Site-preparation techniques have been fairly well worked out for different regions.

(7) Methods of planting are rather well established. But there is one large unknown: the effect of planting method on root contortion and harm to the tree in later life. It is known that if the roots are twisted, bent, or tangled when planted they continue to grow that way. Such roots may eventually die

and form a passage for root and butt-rot fungi. This, along with poor adaptation of species to site and wrong source of seed, may explain the deterioration in some older plantations. The extent of harm that can be done by root contortion due to poor planting is still unknown.

(8) So-called release cuttings in plantations on abandoned farm land are usually not necessary but any possible need is readily ascertained. Planting should not be done on sites that will require release from the undesirable competition unless the release cutting can be provided; otherwise the planting is a waste of money.

In Short

To summarize in a sentence: Re-forestation should have a large part in proper land use because it fills a place which nothing else can, but it is not a panacea for all idle-land problems and it requires the conscientious application of technical knowledge.

Intensifying

For the long pull—after we go back to the ways of peace—the role of food in world stability will be equally vital and even more complex. By then the problem will not be one of correcting the sharp and temporary dislocations of war, but of straightening out long-standing maladjustments.

—HOWARD R. TOLLEY

Alaska AS A

Farmer Sees It

By STANLEY L. BALLOUN. *For more than a year the REVIEW has been negotiating for an agricultural article about Alaska from Alaska, but the Gremlins have interfered all along the line. Now an agriculturist, recently from the Midwest, sends the kind of sketch we had in mind.*



THREE FARMING areas are fairly well developed in Alaska—the Matanuska Valley, the Homer area on the Kenai Peninsula, and the Tanana Valley around Fairbanks. Then there are many localities where small farming enterprises and gardens thrive. The Matanuska and Homer areas both lie within the moderate temperatures of Southern Alaska, where winters are scarcely more severe than in the Middle West.

Matanuska is the more extensively developed of the two and had considerable publicity during its settlement by families from Minnesota and Wisconsin. It is a well-rounded farming community with good roads, schools, and churches. An extension agent advises farmers, any boy or girl may join the 4-H Club, and there is a good high school. Palmer is the principal town in the Valley; it would be called a thriving little village if it were in the Midwest. A part of the Valley is withdrawn for the colonization project of the Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation — the land so withdrawn cannot be en-

tered under the Homestead Law. Other parts of the Valley are open for the usual homestead settlement. Formerly all colonists were required to be members of the Matanuska Valley Cooperating Association through which they bought commodities and service and through which they sold farm products. This membership is not compulsory now but most colonists find it to their advantage to belong to the cooperative. Lands within the colony may be resold without restrictions when the colonist has extinguished his indebtedness and acquired fee title. Otherwise the land is reacquired by the corporation for resale.

The Homer area is somewhat less developed but shows much promise. Its soil is very productive with wild brome grass growing 5 or 6 feet tall. Land is available for homesteading in this area and some cleared and improved land is for sale at reasonable prices. Roads and markets are lacking now but they will undoubtedly be developed.

The Tanana Valley, with Fairbanks as the marketing and trading center, is a promising section but it

is usually overlooked by people who plan to come to Alaska to farm. It is the one I know best. When we came here a winter ago we were amazed to find the farming here so like the farming in Iowa. The Experiment Station has a fine herd of 25 purebred Holsteins, a breeding herd of 8 to 12 Hampshire hogs, and 100 Leghorn layers. The hay in the barn, the oats, wheat, and barley are somewhat heavier than we usually find in the Midwest.

Each morning our six-year-old takes a school bus to the Fairbanks school that is much like the average school in the Midwest. Many of the teachers have recently come from the States.

Balance

We see no Eskimos, igloos, or reindeer but we do have the indescribable beauty of the northern lights, our garden plants in late June make phenomenal growth during the 20-hour sunshine of each day, and the north-slope fields have a characteristic "roughing up" as frost disappears from the subsoil.

The United States Experiment Station, operated by the University of Alaska in cooperation with the Alaska Territory and the United States Department of Agriculture, is 6 miles west of Fairbanks, near College. The farm has about 200 acres cleared and another 200 acres are used as timber pasture and it has much native timberland. Improvements on the experiment farm consist of two dwellings, a modern dairy barn, hog house, machine shed, some granaries, a shop building, and a combination building containing garage, root cellar, and

feed-storage warehouse. All buildings that house livestock must be well insulated and have stoves for heat; otherwise, livestock is fed and cared for about as in colder parts of the Midwest.

Windless Cold

Fortunately in the interior of Alaska there is scarcely any wind so that weather of 50° below zero actually affects livestock that is indoors less than a temperature of 10° below would, with the usual winds of the Midwest. A man can work out-of-doors in cold 40° below zero and feel little discomfort. The air is dry and still, the snow is crisp, light, and dry. Barns and houses are better insulated here than in the States, and work is so arranged that very little time need be spent out in the winter weather. But the long period of cold and snow makes livestock farming more difficult, for the very short pasture season means that cattle must be kept indoors and fed from about October to May, with a great increase in labor and feed requirements.

Paradox

Dairy farming is preeminent in the Tanana Valley. There are two well-established dairies, each maintaining about 80 to 100 producers and some young cattle. Neither farm raises all its own feed. Each finds it more profitable to devote time to milking and marketing. They buy much of their replacement stock for it actually costs more to raise heifers here than to have them shipped in from the State of Washington. With milk valued at from 80 cents to \$1.25 a gallon at the

New Dimensions

We now enter into a world of imponderables and at every stage self-questioning arises.

—WINSTON CHURCHILL

dairy, with hay valued at about \$40 a ton and grain valued at about \$100 a ton, the feed cost alone for a heifer will total about \$250 to \$300 before the first calf, whereas a good heifer, bred to freshen within a very short time after arrival, can be shipped in at between \$200 to \$250, delivered at Fairbanks.

There is no regular creamery or market for bulk dairy products. A farmer must develop his own whole-milk retail outlets or market through one of the two dairies or sell through retail stores in Fairbanks. The city takes all the milk produced by the two dairies and could take more without hurting the market. Pasteurized milk retails in Fairbanks at about 30 cents a quart.

Not Spectacular

Dairy farming in this Valley will probably continue to be profitable within limits. Some production improvements to make for greater efficiency will be needed to compete successfully with dried and canned milk. Feeds for cows here have usually been oat and pea silage; oat-pea hay; and mixtures of barley, wheat, oats, and mill feeds for concentrates. Pastures are very poor in general as there are practically no native pasture grasses, and brome-

grass, the usual cultivated pasture grass, apparently produces little food value on the soils in the Valley. The Fairbanks Station has successfully grown a hardy yellow-blossomed alfalfa for both hay and pasture, which apparently will reduce the cost of making hay.

Heaving Soil

Timothy, brome-grass, sweetclover, bluegrass, and fescues all do fairly well here. Alsike clover is winter-hardy and there are good stands of alsike 6 and 7 years old. The usual hardy strains of alfalfa do not withstand these winters as their deep roots and well-defined crowns leave them very susceptible to the cold of the subsoil and the constant heaving of the soil.

In Tanana Valley we grow practically all of the common Midwestern crops except corn. All kinds of root crops grow to phenomenal size. Cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and head lettuce are especially well adapted and string beans, peas, leaf lettuce, and spinach grow in practically every garden. Peas of fine quality bear all summer and until freezing weather in the fall but such crops as tomatoes and cucumbers develop very poorly because of the coolness of the summers.

Twice

*That is what victory will give us—
a second chance.*

—VIRGINIA GILDERSLEEVE

Many people raise home gardens around Fairbanks, but there is little commercial truck gardening. Until the local merchants are induced to have more confidence in the local quality and supply, there will be little profitable chance for truck gardens here, but more local produce was sold in Fairbanks last year than ever before. In general, the local market handles produce shipped in from Seattle.

Small flocks of poultry are kept successfully by many farmers and part-time farmers but more hens could be raised to advantage. Feed prices are not extremely high considering that fresh eggs bring from \$1 a dozen to \$1.25 in Fairbanks. Storage eggs sell at about 70 cents a dozen, and old-time sourdoughs are likely to say they prefer them to the "tasteless" fresh eggs. Quarters for poultry must be insulated, and a stove must give a little heat, but the hens do not require much care.

Perhaps

A swine plant near Fairbanks for feeding the garbage from Ladd Field might be profitable. Nearly all of this garbage is now wasted. As there is no established market for live hogs, a farmer must do his own butchering and sell independently or to the butcher shops in

Fairbanks. The whole carcass can usually be sold at prices ranging from 30 cents to 50 cents a pound, depending upon quality. Swine do well here, and have practically no parasites or diseases. We can grow excellent forage for the pigs in the summer. The winter quarters must be heated somewhat.

Homestead Conditions

Free land in Alaska—we hear a lot about it. Homestead land and new land available for homesteading. But men who have come rather recently to Alaska thinking they would take up a homestead near Fairbanks have usually been disappointed. The free land is back in the timber away from established roads. A settler has to build his own road through several miles of timber or muskeg swamp, clear the timber from his land, hire a tractor and "breaking plow" at a rate of about \$10 to \$15 an acre to turn over the brush and moss, and then it will take about 3 years for the brush and moss to decay enough so that the land can be farmed with ordinary tools. There is the alternative method of hiring a bulldozer to pile up the brush, trees, and moss and then setting fire to the accumulation, but this leaves a soil that is very low in organic matter and nitrogen content so that much fertilizer would be needed for growing satisfactory crops.

Land

Practically all of the good virgin land is covered with a growth of spruce and birch and has a ground cover of about 4 to 10 inches of moss. In this dry, cold climate there

is very little decay of organic matter in the soil and this moss breaks down very slowly, even when turned under.

Improved land can be bought but it is not cheap. Land on gravel highways, at least partly cleared but with no improvements, has been selling for about \$50 an acre within a 5-mile radius of Fairbanks. If there are buildings, the land may sell for \$80 or more an acre.

Rewards

Agricultural Alaska is a land of real opportunity for those hardy people who are willing to live rather lonely lives in pioneer surroundings,

and to work hard. Many have been disappointed in what they have found here; others have come to Alaska expecting to work and to stay and have made a success of their farming—but not in a hurry. Success stories are frequent, in farming and business as well as in gold. Low fertility of the soil in most places, low temperatures, long winters, and isolation break some people and stimulate others. To him who overcometh, Alaska offers a wealth of untouched scenery, of vast forests and plains, of rampant flowers and berries in the short sunny season, unsurpassed views of the dazzling aurora borealis, and the possibility of an income beyond the hopes of most farmers in the States.

OVER and OVER

Wherever we turn in our search for ways to maintain farm income after the war we are always forced to the conclusion that the farm problem is really much broader than agriculture itself. Farm prosperity is definitely linked up with a high level of nonfarm employment here at home. Also, it is inescapably bound up with the welfare of the peoples throughout the world. And the welfare of other peoples, in turn, is very much dependent on our willingness to buy their products or services as well as sell ours.

—CLAUDE R. WICKARD

SEEDS for the WORLD

By W. A. WHEELER. *That is a big order, but in regard to vegetable seed our country has accepted and filled it, sending seed adapted to the various climates of all parts of the globe. The Contributors' page shows the author's connection with this work but it does not add that he was a member of the USDA Seed Supply Committee in World War I and conferred in Europe with representatives of other Allied countries on seed-supply problems immediately following the Armistice.*



A YEAR OR MORE before Pearl Harbor, Europe had been overrun by the Nazis and the water lanes between many countries had been shut off by submarines, leaving only the United States and Canada as readily accessible sources of large food supplies. Since vegetable seed for planting is potentially the most concentrated form of food or food-producing material that can be shipped, it was given a high degree of priority on both production and shipments.

The portion of Europe overrun by the Nazis had in pre-war days produced a large portion of the vegetable seeds used. Now other sources of supply had to be found. As Canadian vegetable-seed production had not been developed on a large scale the United States was the only fruitful source.

Ever since World War I the United States had produced considerable quantities of vegetable seeds, mostly for planting within the United States and Canada. Now it was necessary to produce for a greatly expanded domestic use, because of the call for a far greater

production of vegetable foods, and to provide seeds to all of the other United Nations and to friendly neutrals. Truly a great responsibility.

The unfolding of this story of vegetable-seed production and distribution from 1940 to 1945 could read like a tale of fiction. Quick expansion, rapid varietal adaptation, maintenance of quality, making just allocations in the face of urgencies, shipping by rail, by water, and by air—it has been a series of adventures.

The requirements of vegetable seeds by the United Nations and friendly neutrals were at first unknown. The roughest kind of estimates had to be made in order to formulate a program of adequate production. As time went on, however, individual countries came through with better estimates of their needs as to both variety and quantity. As each year passed, this picture of requirements has become more nearly complete, placing the United States in a better position to know what it was expected to do.

Vegetable seeds have been supplied, during the last 2 years and

largely through Lend-Lease to a list that spans the alphabet and the world. They have been supplied direct to the American Red Cross and to the U. S. Army. They have also gone to the Governments of Arabia, Australia, the Balkan countries, Belgium, Belgian Congo, Brazil, British East Africa, Ceylon, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, French Cameroons, French North Africa, Gold Coast, Greece, Holland, Honduras, India, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Martinique, New Hebrides, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Russia, Southwest and Central Pacific Islands, Sweden, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, Venezuela, and Virgin Islands.

World Span

Considering the reach of territory covered by such designations as Russia, the United Kingdom, and the Southwest Pacific, it is evident that American-grown seeds are sprouting in all parts of the world, if not in every country.

Because of the very limited supplies in 1940 and 1941, the allocations to claimant countries in many cases covered only a small percentage of the real needs. Each year afterward the supplies became more plentiful. By 1944 the United States produced enough vegetable seed to supply practically the world.

Record Figures

To give an idea of what has been accomplished a few many-digit figures are necessary. In pre-war years the average 3-year production

Indispensable

In peace or in war food is as essential as the air we breathe.

—MARVIN JONES

of the large-seeded vegetables—peas, beans, and sweet corn—was about 100 million pounds; in 1943 and 1944 the average was nearly 300 million pounds. The 3-year average production of small vegetable seeds was formerly about 10 million pounds; the 1944 production was more than 35 million pounds. The four leading biennial seed crops—beet, cabbage, carrot, and onion—in 1944 showed production increases from the 3-year average 1939-41 as follows: Beet seed from 1,311,000 to 5,144,000 pounds, cabbage seed from 424,000 to 2,009,000 pounds, carrot seed from 978,000 to 4,334,000 pounds, onion seed from 469,000 to 2,627,000 pounds. In 1944, the production of these four crops of seed was nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ times the pre-war average.

Phenomenon

To make these increases during 4 years with seed crops which require specialized areas of production and highly technical handling and supervision, is a phenomenal accomplishment for the vegetable-seed growers of our country. Ordinary farmers or novices in this work could not undertake the job. It had to be performed by those growers who, through many years of experience, had developed facilities in the way

of vegetable-seed breeding and specialized processing that equipped them for the huge task. It is one thing simply to get plants to produce seed. It is another problem to produce seed of varietal purity, good quality, and proper adaptation for efficient food production in the certain areas where it is to be sown or planted. Quantity was only the beginning of the problem.

Quality Heightened

Realizing that the higher prices to be paid during the war might bring unqualified producers into the business who would deliver low-quality seed produced at low cost, a special field inspection service was developed by the Department of Agriculture. Through the setting up of eligibility requirements for producers, through field inspection and the testing of all lots produced for foreign shipment, the quality of our seed has been maintained at or above prewar levels. It might have been expected that under war conditions the quality would have been lowered very materially but it has been said by some who are in position to know that the quality of vegetable seed has been improved and that the methods used during this war production to maintain high quality will have their effect for many years to come.

Peak vs. Taper

The years 1944 and 1945 will probably represent the peak of war production. Some 75 million dollars worth of all seeds have been

purchased from this country mainly through Lend Lease during the last 3 years. The greater part of the vegetable seed has been produced under contracts with commercial growers. A large number of the important kinds—including beet, cabbage, carrot, and onion—are biennial. On these items contracts must be placed 2 years in advance of production.

Because of the uncertainty of the demands that may be made on the acreages planted, it is a puzzling matter to plan our vegetable-seed supply in these times. At this writing, we still don't know what China and some of the European countries will need. In 1944 we reached a production that met the world-wide requirements; in 1945, if we have average yields we shall have enough to meet them again. Now we are confronted with the problem of adjusting our supply or tapering off toward a transition or post-war period. This tapering may be a more critical and difficult problem than was the reaching of the huge total.

The Seed

Supplying this seed in the right quantities, varieties, and adaptations has made it possible for the men in our armed forces in many lands and, through the auspices of the Red Cross, for our men and women who are prisoners of war in concentration camps to produce fresh food for their own diets. And we have enabled civilian populations among the United Nations, friendly neutrals, and people in liberated areas to grow their own.

Economic Control through Agricultural Credit Aids

By DONALD C. HORTON. *As instruments of public policy these aids are analyzed in relation to their basic elements, the nature of the controls they exert, their limitations and advantages to agriculture, and their possibilities in post-war economic welfare.*



ECONOMIC control, in the broadest sense of that term, is involved in a large number of the activities of the Federal Government, for these activities help to determine the setting within which individuals and different sectors of the national economy operate. In company with other public policies relating to agriculture, those relating to the financing of farming have important implications when considered from the viewpoint of economic controls operating in this field.

Specific Federal measures in relation to agricultural finance have taken the form mainly of credit aids for farmers. Two basic elements have been present in most of these aids of the last quarter-century: (1) Promotion, or direct provision, of more favorable business-credit arrangements for agriculture and (2) absorption by the Federal Government of varying proportions of the costs and losses resulting from the loan operations in which it participates. These two elements, which may be designated for convenience as the *enterprise* and the *subsidy* elements respectively, have been compounded in the past in widely different proportions—for example, mainly promotion of favorable

business-credit arrangements involving little subsidy in the case of the early Federal land banks, as contrasted with substantial subsidies in the case of many of the agricultural loans of the middle 1930's.

Relationships of government to farmers in connection with these credit aids usually have taken the form of customary business transactions. But the *substance* has often included the performance of certain quasi-governmental functions considered sufficiently beneficial from the viewpoint of general welfare to warrant partial financing with public funds. The Federal Government has acted both in the capacity of an "enterpriser" and in its more conventional capacity as "government." From one viewpoint, the Federal Government has entered the field of private enterprise. From another, it has performed public functions through business relationships with farmers.

Three principal features of these aids need to be distinguished when they are considered from the viewpoint of economic control. The most obvious is direct administrative control over the individual borrowers who receive special credit treatment. Less obvious, but perhaps of even greater long-run im-

portance, is the indirect control exercised by these credit aids through "the market." Still more elusive is that additional form of control that works itself out indirectly through the credit system in its capacity as a source of money supply. Although not administratively separable, these three kinds of control need to be distinguished in any appraisal of the over-all significance of credit aids for the operating economy.

Administrative Control

All loan operations, regardless of the lender, involve the exercise of some control over borrowers, for this is a necessary counterpart of the temporary surrender of control over funds by the lender. In this sense all federally sponsored loan activities involve some economic control designed to protect the Federal Government against excessive losses as a lender.

Some of the federally sponsored agricultural credit arrangements have involved control over individual borrowers very similar to that found in the case of most private loans. This has been true in general for such credit institutions as the Federal land banks, the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation, and the production credit associations. Some additional controls having public objectives that reach beyond those usually associated with credit contracts have been present in certain of the emergency crop and feed loans; also in certain of the loans made by the Regional Agricultural Credit Corporation. But administrative control over individual borrowers, directed to rather broad social objectives, has been present to a much greater extent in many of the

loans made by the Farm Security Administration.

When the Federal Government and federally sponsored credit institutions extend credit on unusually favorable terms, they are usually in a position to exercise more than the customary degree of control over their borrowers. This additional economic power may stem from a number of circumstances—mere ability to lend in periods of general credit stringency; willingness to lend to particular groups of borrowers at a rate of interest below that required to cover the full cost of the service including loan losses; and public sponsorship of new self-supporting credit institutions that can offer advantages to borrowers not available elsewhere even under "normal" conditions. Although the "spending power" of the Federal Government lies back of its strategic position as a lender, any special advantages it can offer borrowers as an "enterpriser" also strengthens this strategic position to some extent.

How Much Control?

It would be surprising indeed, if governmental credit aids did not give rise to some controversy, for such measures necessarily increase the potential scope of the economic power of government. Those who believe that the Federal Government should have a prominent part in the regulation of economic affairs are very likely to emphasize the potential benefits from these credit aids. Others, who as a matter of principle would confine the scope of the economic power of the Federal Government rather narrowly, are likely to emphasize possible dangers in such arrangements. Many of the

controversial issues with regard to particular governmental credit aids for agriculture, therefore, are likely to have roots in long-standing cleavages of opinion regarding the benefits and dangers of economic control over individuals by government. Conflicting schools of thought on this basic question are not a recent phenomenon, as is sometimes suggested in current discussions of "bureaucracy."

Through Market

Agricultural credit aids have an influence both on the usual business operations of the rural economy and on the functioning of the credit system as a part of the national monetary system. These two kinds of influences are merged with still others, and are difficult to identify separately. But the mere fact that agricultural credit aids can indirectly influence *total money supply* necessitates a distinction between their competitive influences that operate through the market and their other indirect influences that operate through the relation of money supply to the aggregate flow of purchasing power.

The influence of credit aids through the market is manifested in many ways. For example, one overall effect of extensive participation of the Federal Government in agricultural lending on a favorable basis for borrowers is to alter the competitive setting within which private rural credit institutions operate. Effects on private lenders in rural areas are likely to be a mixture of (1) assistance to them as well as to borrowers in times of financial strain, (2) competitive pressure both on lenders' interest rates and on their

terms and conditions of loans in "normal" times, and (3) a tendency for some of the private lenders to shift out of agricultural lending into less competitive fields.

A second rather general effect of credit aids is likely to be a tendency for the national agricultural plant to be larger than it otherwise would have been. Credit arrangements are one of many factors that influence the allocation of capital and other resources between agriculture and other sectors of the national economy. A part of the influence of favorable credit arrangements for agriculture, however, may be felt in higher relative valuations of existing agricultural resources—such as farm real estate—so that the money value of the agricultural plant may be increased without necessarily increasing to the same extent the amount of real capital used in agriculture. Even so, these higher capital values have an indirect influence on resource allocation by providing a larger potential credit base against which farm owners can borrow.

Selective

Because most credit aids are selective in their application, they exercise an influence also on the distribution of production resources within the rural economy. For example, loans made to finance farming in areas in which credit previously had been available only in limited amounts or on terms unfavorable for the borrowers give an added stimulus to the production of products adapted to such areas. More capital and other resources are thereby allocated to this production. To the extent that these products compete in the market

with others produced in areas not enjoying cheaper credit, the production pattern of farming in the latter areas has to be adjusted to this new factor in the competitive situation. This may lead to a net reduction in the resources employed in such areas.

The indirect control exercised over the rural economy through credit aids depends on the particular standards adopted by publicly sponsored credit agencies in furnishing special credit treatment. Special credit treatment for owner-operators, for example, favors this particular kind of tenure arrangement in agriculture. Special credit arrangements set up to tap the competitive central money markets as a cheaper and more reliable source of loan funds for farmers favors those farmers whose loans will qualify as security for obligations to be sold in such a money market. These usually are the farmers whose loans involve relatively low risks. Moreover, loans made to farmers who are engaged in unusually risky kinds of agriculture, or to farmers who have limited resources of their own, bolster those kinds of farming and kinds of business structures in agriculture. These several influences have been present in the credit aids of the last quarter century.

Indirect Control

Even without a detailed examination of all the agricultural credit aids of that period, there can be little doubt that they have exerted varying degrees of economic pressure tending to influence the structure and operation of the private credit system, the size and the general com-

position of the national agricultural plant, and many other structural features of the rural economy. Indirect economic control exercised in this way has been intentional in some cases, as in promotion of owner operation; but in most cases this control has been a byproduct of credit programs designed to accomplish other purposes. Because these indirect effects are difficult to measure, they are likely to be given too little attention in the formulation of credit policies.

Money Supply

Implications of credit aids for over-all economic control through money supply are especially significant when consideration is given to the indirect effects of specific credit measures in behalf of agriculture on other sectors of the economy. In times of generally reduced money incomes, the credit system has tended to "freeze up," partly because lenders have been unable or unwilling to lend and partly because borrowers have been unable or unwilling to borrow. Willingness of the Federal Government to shoulder a part of the risks and costs of credit under such circumstances facilitates credit expansion (or retards credit contraction), and so helps to bolster money incomes. Under depression conditions these general effects are likely to be beneficial for the economy as a whole as well as for the lenders and borrowers immediately concerned.

In periods of boom, credit aids also have sufficient potential significance for money supply to require that they be evaluated from that viewpoint. Under such conditions, their general expansionary effects

may run counter to the public interest in the total money supply. This means that some of the advantages of credit arrangements in dealing with specific agricultural problems may be offset by the undesirable influence exerted on total money supply. Under such conditions instruments of economic control that are neutral or even restrictive in their monetary effects may have decided advantages over credit aids.

Use of control instruments that have inflationary influences may nevertheless be dictated by the need for speedy redirection of the rural economy, as in a wartime emergency. Under such conditions, however, expansionary credit arrangements are very likely to be used in conjunction with general fiscal policies of an anti-inflationary nature, so that their expansionary effects on total money supply are at least partially offset.

Agricultural Contact

It seems probable that the need to choose among alternative avenues through which to make governmental contact with particular agricultural problems will continue. Government policies have been associated in the past with a large number of different quasi-business and government relationships between the Federal Government and rural people. Lending money to farmers is only one among many of these relations. A thorough analysis of the technical characteristics of the financing process when viewed as a contact point between the Government and the rural people involves too much for summary treatment, but a few thoughts may

be offered briefly to provoke further discussion.

The principal technical arrangements through which public policy, operating through financing arrangements, can directly influence the rural economy are: (1) By making loan capital available to rural people, (2) by favorable interest rates and other terms and conditions of loans, and (3) by the exercise of special control over borrowers in connection with individual loan contracts. An important question, therefore, relates to whether particular agricultural problems are associated with the use of borrowed money in such a way that financing farming can serve as a vehicle for effective public action to deal with them.

Limitations

All farmers use capital both as producers and as consumers, but the extent to which *borrowed* capital is used (or would be used if available) varies widely among different farm families. For example, the financing process makes only limited business contacts with those farmers who are so well off that they do not need to borrow and with those so low in

Storm Sails

*The dogmas of the quiet past
are inadequate to the stormy
present . . . as our cause is new,
so we must think and act anew.*

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

the economic scale that credit is of no great use to them. Moreover, borrowing money is not of equal importance for all members of a particular producer or consumer group. Such considerations alone suggest that the financing process has distinct limitations as a technical point of contact through which to influence particular groups in the rural economy.

Possibilities

The financing process is likely to be very useful as a contact point in connection with certain types of agricultural problems that are characteristic of depression periods. Under these conditions the Government can exercise a direct influence on large numbers of rural people, both by furnishing a credit service that is not otherwise available, and by furnishing it on terms favorable for the borrowers.

The financing process has distinctive advantages also as an avenue through which to deal with particular kinds of situations that are not peculiar to depressions, for many continuing agricultural problems are directly associated with the use of loan-capital by farmers. For example, promotion of farm ownership for groups with limited capital of their own, enlarging farm units to a size adequate to yield a reasonable income, major capital improvements for the farm business and farm home, capital inputs such as are involved in publicly sponsored conservation and land-development programs—all these involve potential uses of borrowed capital by farmers.

Moreover, loan transactions usually provide a better basis than general price aids for selective assistance,

for each loan is a separate transaction. Because selection of borrowers is accepted as necessary in all credit arrangements, loans are likely to provide an acceptable basis also for differential treatment of borrowers based on broad considerations of public policy.

Finally, because loan contracts carry the implication of at least some direct control by the lender, the use of financing operations as a contact with agricultural problems can be helpful when the public objectives require that certain groups adhere to performance standards over an extended period that can be covered by a loan contract.

Policy Instruments

If, as many people think, governmental action is likely to play an important part in post-war agriculture, it is probable that the financing process will continue to be one of several important contact points between our Government and our rural people. How effective credit transactions alone can be as "conveyor belts" for public agricultural policies depends heavily on what kind of public policies these credit arrangements are called upon to effectuate. Good results in any field of public policy can be achieved only by using control instruments that are technically adapted to the job assigned to them. We need to know more about what can and cannot be done with credit aids. Indeed, a better understanding of the technical characteristics of all important instruments of public agricultural policy, including credit aids, would go far to provide a better basis for the evaluation of specific measures in the post-war period.

Farm Old-Age Security:

Chance for Youth and Veterans

By PAUL A. EKE. *From Idaho comes this outline of a tentative plan designed to strengthen old-age security for farmers and at the same time provide increased opportunities for returning service men and for rural youth. Its author offers it for consideration and discussion. It does not necessarily represent the thought of his institution or of this magazine.*



SOCIAL SECURITY for farmers resolves itself largely into a question of reliable and adequate incomes in old age. Their security in the past has been dependent chiefly upon accumulating an operator's equity in a farm business. In most instances attempts have been made, upon retirement, to live on the income from the equity, the principal being transmitted to heirs as an estate. Frequently, children have cared for parents on a promise of inheriting the farm. This method does not now seem feasible for lately children have not, as a rule, contributed very much to building the estate and often they have not felt they were in a position to care for aged parents.

Faced with this situation many farmers continue to follow tradition in giving up active farm work to live on inadequate incomes from their farm equities. Lack of familiarity with and faith in the newer financial institutions that could provide an annuity from the combined interest and principal is partly the reason. With returning servicemen and war industrial workers seeking livelihoods on farms after the war,

a better system of old-age security for farmers could seemingly be used as a tool in giving these men more opportunities. From past experience it is estimated that only 350,000 commercial farms will be available for young farmers immediately after the war, and these will not care for even the more mature and experienced farm boys now in the service and in emergency industrial work.

The question then arises, How can more farm opportunities be provided? The answer lies chiefly in making it easy and desirable for older and physically unfit farmers to retire. This would fit in well with the hopes and ambitions of most farmers. They look forward to independence in old age. A tentative program for making such retirement possible is outlined below.

As a start it is assumed that provisions of the old-age and survivors insurance will eventually be made available to all farmers and farm laborers, to domestic and all other kinds of labor, and to all self-employed persons, in substantially the same form as for occupations now covered by the Social Security

Act. It is further assumed that net incomes will be the basis for benefits and for supporting taxation for all self-employed persons. Farmer's net incomes could be learned from income-tax reports to be required of all farm operators. This suggested program is, therefore, supplementary to an expanded Social Security Act.

Older farmers would have certain monthly benefits after they have qualified for full insurance. These benefits would be considerably lower for most farmers than for most industrial workers because farmers have lower average net cash incomes. For this reason going completely away from the shelter and food furnished by the farm would be impracticable for most farmers.

Tentative Program

To ameliorate this situation and for other benefits, the following program is suggested.

1. A guaranteed life annuity with a liberal upper limit could be sold by the Government to the retiring farm operator who can pay for it with his equity in a farm or in farm equipment, livestock, and cash savings. The operator would sell or cash equities sufficient to pay for the minimum annuities required and for any amount desired above this up to a certain maximum allowed by law. All farmers over a certain age, say 55 or 60 years, would be eligible to make application upon retirement from active commercial farm operation, though the farm business need not be sold. The sum of the earned monthly benefit under the Social Security Act (due at 65 years), plus what the farmer purchased, would

have to equal a minimum figure which is judged to be a reasonably safe amount for retirement in the area in which he lives. If the farmer later earned more than a certain amount in wages per month or entered active commercial farming, the earned benefit payments would be stopped in a way provided for in the Social Security Act, and payment from the purchased annuities would be suspended and allowed to accrue to the date when the farmer again applied for retirement.

The operator would sell his farm at private sale or in some instances to a Government agency such as the Farm Security Administration, and (or) cash securities sufficient to pay for the minimum annuities required in his area or any desired amount above this up to a certain maximum allowed by law. The cost of annuities would be determined by standard experience tables. For any farmer and his wife the costs will depend upon the ages of each when the annuity is purchased and the ages when the monthly benefit payments are to begin.

Illustration

For example, if an operator had a farm which he sold for \$10,000 and paid off a mortgage of \$5,000 he could spend \$2,500 for an annuity for himself and a like amount for his wife. If the operator was 10 years older than his wife and annuity payments for each were to begin at 60 years of age the wife could buy a somewhat larger monthly payment with her \$2,500 in spite of the fact that average longevity is a little higher for women than for men. Or the

Menace

Poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity and civilization everywhere.

—FRANCES PERKINS

farmer and his wife might each buy a \$2,000 annuity and reserve \$1,000 for emergency or special use.

These annuity policies would be irrevocable and no policy loans would be allowed on their current cash value. To allow this would defeat the chief purpose of old-age security legislation.

A choice might be allowed. It might be possible either to purchase an annuity that would be for life and allow no refund after death or to purchase a policy which allows a refund of the balance to heirs. The latter policy would yield considerably less per month from the same purchase price. Where grants are involved the former policy probably should be required.

2. Farmers reaching 65 years of age could apply for the benefits described above and the same qualifying conditions would be imposed. But, in addition, either an owner or a tenant, who does not at this age obtain enough—from the sale of his farm business, plus cash savings (including any endowment insurance, etc.), and in Social Security accumulations—to pay for a certain minimum monthly benefit in full, would be given a grant to supply this deficit. Certain safeguards should be required such as proof that all or part of the farm and other assets had not been given away or squandered

during the 5 or 10 years preceding the application for this grant.

3. Totally and permanently disabled farmers could purchase guaranteed annuities from the Government at any age after being qualified for full insurance under the Social Security Act.

4. The annuities purchased by funds from the equity in the farm business and from other assets should be divided to give annuities to husband and to wife equally at any desired age for each, beginning not earlier than 55 or 60 years, and perhaps in some States necessarily divided in conformity to community property laws. Or perhaps a joint and survivorship annuity, which means that both lives are insured together, would be preferable.

In Addition

Certain questions of policy arise. What about minimum monthly benefits? If they are decided upon, grants will be required. Standards for gauging the amount of these grants could be established, by regions, from cost-of-living indexes already compiled by the United States Department of Agriculture. The monthly benefit could be adjusted each year to fluctuate from some suitable base period, conforming with fluctuations in the official cost-of-living index.

It might be thought a wise policy to include certain basic comforts in the provisions. The Government might finance, with direct or guaranteed loans, dwellings for those elderly couples who want them. These might be individual cottages or something resembling apartment houses. Subsidies for minimum comforts might be just-

fied for the farmers who have the minimum monthly benefit.

It may be good policy to provide so that medical attention for life can be bought for both husband and wife, by payment of a lump sum to the Government. The Government could then make required payments to a qualified mutual, co-operative, or governmental health agency. Funeral expenses could be cared for in a similar way. For some farmers it may be necessary to provide for this, in part or entirely, through a grant.

Consideration might well be given to the policy of developing for sale certain Government retirement bonds which farmers and others could buy and use in purchasing immediate retirement annuities and health insurance as suggested in this plan.

For Discussion

The writer offers this tentative program for discussion by farm organizations as a possible important feature in their post-war plans for greater farm efficiency and better farm living. Are the policies it involves sound and practicable? Would it improve general as well as farmer welfare? Veteran's organizations also might find this a theme worthy of their attention.

Aftermath

Education would be necessary after this plan became law. Government agencies that are in contact with farmers—such as the Farm Security Administration, Soil Conservation Service, Farm Credit Administration, and Extension Service—could supply leaflets explaining the plan and procedure and could display posters in their field offices. Application blanks could be carried

by these agencies and printed matter could be mailed out to likely clients.

Undoubtedly Social Security Offices would need to be expanded to include an agricultural division in each district. This division would administer all provisions. In some instances these Government agencies, particularly the Farm Security Administration, might well act as an agent for Social Security Offices and work closely in assisting farmers to comply with the provisions in regard to the sale or lease of their farm properties. This would be particularly desirable in a zoned area or where farms should be consolidated. For a time after the war, veterans' organizations might search out clients, while they are assisting veterans.

Many might benefit besides the farmers and their wives. Young men who want to farm and real estate agents would like to have elderly farmers take advantage of this plan. Areas that are highly favored by nature, such as can be found in California, Florida, and other States, where retired farmers and their wives like to go, would be more than kindly disposed toward this program. Rural villages and cities would occasionally find the plan encouraged their expansion and growth. Some recreational places would have added business. All sorts of services for the aged—medical, religious, literary—might find a solid basis for support and expansion. Insurance companies might find it profitable to offer a competitive retirement policy that would give about the same service to retired farmers. If the plan here outlined proved worth while, custom would soon play a large part in its expansion.

ANSWERING AN SOS

FROM *South Africa*

By HUGH HAMMOND BENNETT. *To make the survey on which this article is based the author braved the discomforts of bomber travel, encountered several lions, and side-stepped a cobra or two. Being Chief of the SCS must now seem somewhat tamer work than it ever has before.*



FROM my visit to the Union of South Africa last year, I came away with two distinct impressions.

One is that if South Africa is to survive in any sound agricultural sense, a comprehensive soil conservation program must be instituted without delay. The other has to do with the rare but excellent examples of erosion-control practices that I saw with my own eyes which indicated that their problem, as a whole, should not be as difficult of solution in the physical sense as the problem we confront in our country.

The purpose of my journey was to consult with officials of the Union Government regarding their soil-erosion problem. I had been warned that their problem was extremely serious and rapidly growing worse. I knew, too, that as far back as 1923, a special drought committee had conducted an extensive study of the Union's land areas and given an alarming report on the prevalence of severe erosion.

Soon after my arrival I found that many serious-minded South Afri-

cans were much concerned about the widespread erosion damage. They were impatient for action. A considerable amount of research and educational work had been carried on but nothing much had been done to the land.

We soon agreed that before making any recommendations I must see the land itself for a first-hand observation of its condition and needs. With officials of the Soil and Veld Conservation Division of the Union of South Africa Department of Agriculture I set out to see the situation. We toured the Union widely and I was invited to speak out at any time in any critical way that seemed best. The cause for their alarm became evident as we traveled. There was active erosion almost everywhere—on grazing land as well as cropland, and in most cases little was being done about it.

As might be expected from our own experience in the United States, most of the native farmers and many of the Europeans did not fully appreciate what was happening to their land. This lack of understanding of the erosion process is more serious than might be supposed.

People don't go out and wilfully destroy their farm lands. Nevertheless, failure to recognize the deadly meaning of erosion until the land has been severely damaged or completely ruined for any practical use has impoverished many nations in the past and has even been a principal cause for the decay and downfall of entire civilizations. Still too many of us go right on making the same mistakes with all of these records before us. And it could be stopped—to our great advantage from every point of view.

Devastation

Too often, in South Africa, we saw large areas of formerly good land that have literally washed away, particularly where the natives were densely concentrated. For example, a large area in Natal that was inspected in detail was completely devastated. Both the soil and subsoil had washed off down to bedrock on most of the land and the people who formerly farmed this land were stranded. Some were going miles from their huts to plant small patches of corn wherever they could find a plot of ground that still had some soil left on it. Others were going hundreds of miles to work in the mines near Johannesburg. Many of these people were not merely undernourished but were actually hungry.

Many such devastated areas are called labor farms. Owners of the land turn certain tracts over to the natives to do with as they please. In the place of rental, the native operators devote half their time working on the owner's farm. In other words, a part of South Africa's irreplaceable soil is being used up as a medium of payment for farm work.

The native farmers seldom know or even care anything about modern conservation farming methods. Consequently, the soil usually washes away faster than it could be hauled away in a truck.

In another region—in the section between Pietersburg and the Drakensberg highlands in northern Transvaal—a solid block of more than 100,000 acres of once good land has been stripped of practically all the topsoil by both natives and Europeans. Contour farming, crop rotation, and other soil-conserving practices are almost unheard of in the area. Both animal manure and corn stalks are burned for fuel. In fact, every vestige of crop residue left in the fields is grazed to the bare surface of the ground, leaving the soil exposed to the vicissitudes of wind and water most of the time. Present yields of corn on such land range from nothing to about 3 or 4 bushels per acre—too little to support people in any adequate sense.

In the Orange Free State we traveled more than 200 miles along a main highway without seeing a single field on which soil-conserving practices were being used. This region is suffering extensively from sheet erosion.

Abandonment

Approaching Capetown from the Northeast, we noted destructive erosion over practically the entire wheat belt of that region. Indeed, much of what was formerly the Union's best wheat land has been abandoned because the soil has become so thin above its rock base that it is no longer plowable. Worthless rhinoceros weed covers thousands on thousands of acres of formerly good land that is now ruined.

Sheep raising once brought easy fortunes to many ranchers of the Great Karoo, a shrub-covered region in the Cape of Good Hope province, lying midway between the desert country to the west and the higher rainfall section of the east. Today erosion is on the march over millions of such acres. Only where protective measures have been introduced has the land remained good sheep country.

In my travels far and wide throughout this world I have seen many sad examples of erosion, but I have never, anywhere, come across more mismanagement of land than we found in the Karoo. Repeated burning and overgrazing of the highland areas have destroyed the ground's normal sponginess. Rain that once infiltrated into the soil through a cover of vegetation now runs off the bared surface as from a metal roof, flooding the associated flat lands, and taking with it the topsoil of both the slopes and flats.

Restoratives

Happily, there is still time to restore some of this land to a degree of its former productivity. Without delay, the highlands of the Karoo and the other hill and mountainous regions of central and eastern South Africa should be fenced and protected against fire. This, of course, necessitates Government action. Also, reforestation and restrictive grazing of certain areas would be helpful.

Erosion control on a large scale calls for treatment of the land according to its adaptability through scientifically applied measures. There are no short cuts. As a rule, farmers need technical assistance which the

Government should provide as its share of keeping land productive for the permanent welfare of the Nation.

Far from being impracticable, the introduction of conservation measures has many advantages. First of all, it is easier, more economical, and more remunerative to prevent erosion than to follow ordinary wasteful farming methods. For instance, contour plowing across slopes on the level requires less gasoline and less time than plowing up and down slopes. Plowing on the level utilizes less animal and manpower, and is less wearing on machines. More important, with the increase in yields per acre that accompanies conservation farming, beginning usually with the first crop, it follows, quite naturally, that the producer's income is increased.

The job of the staff of the South African Department of Agriculture and others interested in conservation matters should prove considerably easier than ours in the United States has been because of the smoother slopes prevalent in the Union and because of the greater variety of soil-improving and soil-binding grasses native to South Africa.

Examples of Success

Now for examples of erosion control, attesting to its worth many times over: studying the country in detail brought us into contact with occasional farmers who were profiting from the advice of South Africa's capable technicians. Dr. Hans Marensky, a Transvaal farmer, is achieving success with citrus fruit, avocados, and bananas through contour planting on a large scale. In addition, he has restored eroded slopes to good grazing land. More

than that, working conservation magic on prematurely dry springs and small streams, he has brought them back to normal. A new variety of voodoo stuff, you might say. Incidentally, the controlled run-off from contour planting can be utilized downstream for stock water and to grow the feed to carry cattle through the dry period of late winter.

In Swaziland and especially in Basutoland, farmed mostly by Negroes, some highly successful conservation work is being done with contour embankments. Curiously enough, the natives were benefiting from soil and water conservation practices introduced by specialists who had spent considerable time studying such practices in the United States. Evidencing the value of the new farming methods, corn yields were stepped up from approximately 3 bushels to 12 to 15 bushels an acre.

Why Not?

"How do you like these contour farming practices?" I asked a Basuto chief.

"Frankly, we were slow in adopting them because we didn't realize their importance," he said. "Now that we have seen their advantages, we consider them a blessing; they not only prevent the formation of dongas (gullies), they give us more to eat."

I turned to my South African co-workers. "We've been discussing more or less difficult questions of erosion control, yet here's a solid block of 10,000 acres where Europeans and natives, working together, have completed a first-class job of up-to-date soil conservation. If they can do it, why can't everyone?"

Space does not permit outlining in detail the national program drawn up for the conservation of South Africa's agricultural lands, but it may be said that the one left with them was based largely on the national soil conservation program under way in the United States.

National Program

If the plan is adopted, it certainly will help to solve some very real human problems — problems so tough that most folks are inclined to leave them alone after one look at them—or go off on a tangent for a lot of theorizing, whereas the only way to keep land productive or improve impoverished farm land is to introduce practices tested and found worth while: contour cultivation, strip cropping, terracing, run-off control, crop rotation with soil-building legumes, application of animal manure and compost, and the retirement of steep, erodible slopes to the production of trees or grass.

Already the practicability of soil and water conservation practices has been demonstrated in South Africa. Under conservation laws, a number of Conservation Areas have been established—one of which is the Drakensberg Area in Natal, comprising 3,000 square miles of severely eroded land along the Tugela and Mooi Rivers.

I believe that the good results obtained in South Africa where conservation practices have been tried out will serve as a springboard for tackling the national erosion problem. The fact that the Union sent an S O S (Save Our Soil) to the United States indicates that South Africa definitely is aware of the threat to its soil fertility—indispensable to the life of the nation's people.

"Smoke Gets in Your Eyes"

By CHARLES E. GAGE. *It's not just this year—throughout the past, tobacco in one form or another has been a conversation piece and perhaps it always will be. These pages give some of the reasons why and show that its reputation as a soil destroyer is outmoded.*



FUNNY THING about tobacco is that when we look lazily back across the centuries through half-shut eyes we conjure it up in an atmosphere of glamor, romance, and unreality. The haze is pretty thick, but through it we seem to see many things such as solemn-faced Indians passing a ceremonial pipe from hand to hand, silver-buckled colonists, white sailed ships coming in to dock, a wealthy, leisurely plantation aristocracy based on the fragrant weed . . .

That the history of tobacco has its glamorous and romantic aspects cannot be denied. These are the more pleasant to contemplate, however, when viewed through rose-tinted glasses that filter out the heartbreaking struggles with overproduction, low prices, and marketing difficulties that have recurred throughout tobacco history in America, and the grinding toil always required to produce and sell a crop of tobacco. Scarcely had the first pole stockade at Jamestown rotted down when crude attempts were made to control production and bolster prices of tobacco. The long succession of such

attempts by colonial laws might have been more successful had Virginia and Maryland been able to cooperate and to coordinate their efforts. Seems like every time the one tried to improve prices by choking off production, the other figured to cash in by raising a big crop. These colonists were singularly modern in some of their thinking.

Distant indeed are the days when tiny English sailing vessels poked their inquisitive prows annually into every southern bay, inlet, and navigable stream, seeking out plantation landings where they might sell English goods and load up with tobacco. The "tobacco fleet" became an established institution and injected rare interludes of excitement into the somnolent colonial life. And numerous are the ghost towns of later date whose reasons for existence were snuffed out in the evolution of more centralized marketing methods. Their place, like that of the tobacco fleet, now is in the romantic background of tobacco history.

Tobacco has been unjustly stigmatized as the great soil destroyer. True, in those early days before rotation, fertilization, and green manur-

ing were understood the thin Tidewater soils were soon exhausted. Constantly new land had to be cleared. With nothing but water to the east and nothing but forest to the west,—well? Tobacco might be given more credit for the westward march of empire. In Virginia tobacco culture moved out of the Tidewater and into the Piedmont, but before the process of moving had to be repeated, the agricultural reform came along. With it came such men as John Taylor and Edmund Ruffin, preaching a new gospel of diversified farming and enlightened soil management. Thus was tobacco production put on a more enduring basis.

Agitated reformers of the anti-tobacco variety have sprung up in all ages. Those of us who regard the late Hugh Johnson and some of his contemporaries in the field of controversy as masters of invective should read King James' thundering "Counterblaste to Tobacco." In that small document James not only established himself as the first great anti-tobacco agitator, but as one of the great masters of all time in the art of virulent, stinging denunciation. If his artistry and sovereign powers were insufficient to stem the incipient tobacco habit of his day, what chance has any subsequent reformer had?

Reversal

The present war has dramatized our seemingly illogical dependence on tobacco. More than ever we have come to realize its importance in maintaining morale, not only among our fighting forces but more generally. Perhaps I get a closer view of it than some, for to me come

ALL HANDS

Peace is everybody's business.

—EDWARD R. STETTINIUS

many of the wails of war workers and groups of people everywhere, who think they can't be efficient without more cigarettes, of cries that crews cannot be hired to man new ships unless supplies of tobacco can be assured, etc., etc. It isn't funny; on the contrary it is very real and quite serious. We are in a period of taut nerves, of constant urgings toward greater output, of doing without many things we would like to eat or drink, wear, or spend our money on. Tobacco is not only the great companion in contentment, it is solace in time of trouble. Millions turn to it for surcease from strain, worry, possibly even grief.

Warning

Aside from the psychological factors which now stimulate the craving for tobacco, the close correlation between industrial output and tobacco consumption affords its own reason for the extraordinary increase in tobacco consumption in the last 3 years. Also, it points a warning finger at possible decreases in consumption when the present frenzy of war production is over. There is food for thought in this for those who will guide agricultural policy in the post-war period. Consider it from the angle of cigarette consumption. Statistics of the past show conclusively that when employment is at a low level tobacco consumption is low. In boom times, tobacco consumption

rises correspondingly. But within this general movement two divergent trends stand out: in hard times fewer people smoke cigarettes and more people turn to the pipe; in boom times many pipe smokers turn to cigarettes and pipe smoking falls off. The two products occupy the opposite ends of a teeter board.

Unprecedented

During the last 3 years industrial activity in the United States has reached a stage absolutely without precedent, and civilian demand for cigarettes has risen accordingly. Coincidentally, several million young men have gone into the armed services and the Merchant Marine. Not only are they copiously supplied with cigarettes, but the exigencies of supplying them are such that vast quantities beyond their current smoking needs must at all times be afloat or in many supply centers behind the lines. Provision must be made also against sea and battle losses, and against pilferage. All this adds up to a national cigarette output that is staggering in size. Granting that peacetime industrial activity may be on a grand scale, it cannot reasonably be expected to employ as many workers as have been required for the war

effort, nor to yield as high worker income. A diminution in cigarette requirements on this score seems inevitable, and also with respect to overseas requirements. If, as seems possible, the declaration of peace and wholesale cancellation of war contracts are accompanied by a period of relative idleness for reconverting industry to the manufacture of peacetime goods, the decline in cigarette consumption may be of serious proportions. I anticipate a considerable initial reduction, followed by a new era of expansion wherein cigarette consumption may eventually get back to its wartime proportions.

Revenue

In the meantime tobacco is contributing its share in revenue toward the war. Notwithstanding the great volume of tobacco products sent tax-free to the services abroad, the revenue from tobacco to the United States Government during the last fiscal year was close to a billion dollars. All governments have depended on this source of money. Even King James' aversion to tobacco may have been diluted, as time went on, by the gentle rain of customs and import duties pattering into his strongbox.

Weather Again

The weather is always doing something—attending strictly to business or getting up new designs and trying them on people.

—MARK TWAIN

Denmark—

LAND OF FAMILY FARMS

By ELIZABETH R. HOOKER. *After making a comprehensive study of agriculture and tenure in pre-war Denmark, this economist is convinced that post-war America could learn some lessons from experiences there.*



FARMERS of Denmark encountered two major emergencies between the beginning of the first World War and the invasion of 1940—first in the war years 1914-18, when Danish commerce was seriously interrupted, and again in the early 1930's, when the countries to which Denmark sent its butter and bacon raised barriers against imports. All emergencies were met promptly and successfully.

Between these two crises there was a period of "normal" conditions culminating in 1929. During this period well over 200,000 of the Danish agricultural holdings, or 99 percent of the total number, were operated by resident families. Together, these family farms occupied nine-tenths of the total agricultural area, and on them was raised a very large part of the national production of livestock. Besides achieving great efficiency in production, these farmers attained an enviable degree of success in marketing—attainments unsurpassed by our most highly organized commercial farms here in the United States.

At the end of World War II, farmers in the United States will face the necessity of making complex

adjustments to changed conditions. The Danish experience may suggest to our farmers how some of their post-war problems may be solved.

The Danes had two kinds of family farms, larger ones here called farms, and smaller ones designated as small holdings. The farms, with their huge barns often surmounted by a windmill and their trim farmhouses with red-tile roofs, were a characteristic feature of the landscape. Numbering some 88,000, they occupied more than five-eighths of the agricultural area.

A few figures are necessary. Since nearly half of them ranged in size between 37 and 75 acres, and the number below this range was approximately equal to the number above it, Danish statistics for farms of the 37- to 75-acre size group will be taken as typical. The average farm of this group covered 54 acres. It was stocked with 18 head of cattle (including 9 cows), 20 pigs, 88 hens, and 3 or 4 horses. To raise feed for these animals, 20.5 acres of the land were in grain, 6 acres in roots, and 21.5 acres in meadow and pasture, leaving only 6 acres for buildings and garden, and for potatoes and all other crops. The unit was definitely not a subsistence homestead but a commercial farm.

All Help

Half the work on the place was performed by the farmer and his wife, and a son or daughter 15 years or over. Children who were still in school did some of the simpler chores. One or two year-round assistants were employed. Perhaps one was the son of another family farmer who came to live in the household and work on the farm to gain experience and accumulate savings in the hope of some day buying a farm of his own. In some cases a cattleman or a dairymaid was hired.

Farms larger or smaller than the range selected as typical were different only in the scale of their possessions and operations.

Scattered among these farms all over Denmark were more than 111,000 *small holdings*. Some had modern story-and-a-half houses and fair-sized barns; at the other extreme were little properties with thatched cottages and barns. Small holdings covered one-fourth of the farm area of Denmark. The more prosperous small holdings were typified by those of from 12½ to 25 acres. Of the 17 acres in the average holding of this group, 15 acres were devoted to raising feed for stock, leaving only 2 acres for buildings and all other purposes. The domestic animals consisted of 6 cattle (including 4 cows), 8 pigs, 61 hens, and 1 or 2 horses. Thus, on their smaller scale, the small holdings resembled the farms in that they were commercial enterprises.

Small holders spent all or most of their time in operating their holdings. The owner and members of his family usually did all the work. On about a third of the holdings the operator had the help of a son or

daughter 15 years of age or over; almost invariably his wife helped him; and any children of school age did the weeding and the farm chores. But on one holding in five a year-round farm servant was employed, and on others temporary labor was hired for several days in the year.

Well over half the small holdings, however, covered less than 12½ acres and raised comparatively few animals. The occupiers commonly earned part of the family living through work in other men's fields, or through fishing or other employment. Their great ambition was to acquire larger places on which they could work full time and earn all the family living.

Ownership

Possession of title to the property was the form of tenure for a large proportion of the farms and small holdings. Under a law of 1919, ownership was fast superseding the surviving vestiges of tenancy. A class of small holders instituted by a law of 1919, however, occupied pieces of land belonging to the State. Because the tenure conditions were very secure and because the occupiers held actual title to their buildings, livestock, and equipment, this form of tenure, in a law of 1934, was classified under ownership.

A Danish family farmer had several reasons for wishing to own his place. He needed absolute security of tenure if he was to risk the large expenditures necessitated by the climate and soil, and by his specialized production to meet the demands of foreign markets. Again, he craved the freedom and independence characteristic of ownership, and the

general respect which in Danish country districts is accorded only to owners of the land cultivated. Most important of all, the family farmer regarded his property as primarily a home for himself and his wife and children. Sales of farm property were rare. As a rule, each household was rooted in the fields of the family farm.

Efficiency

Continuous ownership of neighboring farms by much the same group of families naturally meant friendly local relationships. Farmhouses were near together. There were no serious topographical barriers. Good roads, bridges, and ferries, with horses, bicycles, automobiles, and buses, made communication easy. Besides, the country people were unusually homogeneous. All but one in 79 were native born, and all but one in 50 were connected with the Evangelical Lutheran Church. As owners of farm properties, large or small, they felt themselves to be members of the same social class, and they had common interests and similar problems. All had received a sound elementary education. A series of advanced schools, originated by the country people themselves, developed strong and well-informed rural leadership.

Common desire for knowledge of the latest discoveries in the agricultural sciences has long since resulted in the formation of societies of farmers and of small holders. Special groups connected with these societies hired experts to teach their members efficient methods of production and means of adapting their products to the demands of the export trade. Each local society conducted its own

affairs. To perform services impossible for local groups, the societies formed representative regional and national bodies.

Cooperation

Danish family farmers engaged in business together. Through mutual credit associations they obtained loans safely, cheaply, and on convenient terms. Through consumers' societies they bought economically supplies and equipment of good quality for their farms and their homes. By means of various forms of mutual insurance they took precautions against loss as a result of hail, flood, and the death of domestic animals; and for many years they made provision for the expenses of illness and burial through similar mutual agencies.

Because as individual farmers they could not produce the uniform, high-grade butter and bacon demanded for the export trade, they formed co-operatives to contract loans on their combined credit and to erect and operate creameries and bacon-packing plants. In our representative size groups, more than nine-tenths of the farmers and nearly nine-tenths of the small holders were members of cooperative creameries; and three-fourths of the farmers and more than seven-tenths of the small holders were members of cooperative bacon-packing plants. Each local cooperative ran its own business.

Federation

For common purposes they formed regional and national bodies; and the national federations had combined with the Federation of Farmers' Societies to form an Agricultural Council representing all

agricultural interests. Thus, the family farmers had come to possess collective opinions on agricultural affairs and had developed machinery for making these opinions effective.

Political Action

Neither the farmers singly nor their agencies could attain all their objectives without the backing of the State. For example, they realized, about 1890, that they could not protect the reputation of their products abroad from being damaged by poor goods offered as Danish by careless or unscrupulous exporters. The farmers wanted legal standards, enforced through official inspections, with penalties for infringement. Of the 168 members of the Danish Parliament in the year 1890-91, 47 were farmers and 8 were small holders. After 20 years of work by these representatives, a special Butter Trade-mark Society, and the farmers' national bodies, the desired legislation was enacted in 1906 and 1911. Later, less time and effort were required to pass laws desired by farmers; for the export of agricultural products has come to be recognized as the basis of the national economy.

Family farmers have long supported legislation for the establishment of small holdings. In 1933 they took part in enacting comprehensive social security legislation, into which were incorporated their long-tested mutual arrangements for financing illness and burial. Legislation was also employed in meeting the great emergencies between 1914 and 1940.

Consequence

The preponderance of family farms conditioned in various ways

the economic, social, and political situation of the whole country. In the economic field, several effects of their influence were evident. Because family farms raised more cows, pigs, and hens per acre than did larger agricultural properties, the national production was greater than it would have been had the land been held in large estates. Through their agencies they improved the quality of the products exported. Ranging in size as they did from tiny holdings to farms of 250 acres or more, the family farms constituted a genuine agricultural ladder. More than 200,000 prosperous country households afforded a market for goods and services to workers of many other occupations.

Family farmers contributed actively to the social well-being. Because they constituted a stable and contented rural population, contemporary Denmark experienced no alarming migration away from the country districts either to the towns or to foreign lands. As landless agricultural laborers were few, and a thrifty farm worker could readily obtain a small holding with governmental help, agricultural laborers did not form, as in some countries, a hotbed of discontent. Moreover, the reservoir of population, for which all peoples look to their country districts, was in Denmark composed of sound and intelligent persons, industrious, moral, and self-respecting.

In the realm of politics family farmers made themselves felt through their contagious democratic spirit. Whenever feasible, they exerted their influence in favor of the administration of affairs by private individuals or agencies. When State control seemed necessary, the family farmers sponsored measures that

were conducive to rural and national prosperity, and stood—especially the small holders—for the defense of the economically weaker classes both in the country and in the towns. Prosperous, contented family farmers have protected Denmark from the agrarian unrest, with actual or threatened revolution, which in our day has imperiled the countries of Eastern Europe. Intelligent, articu-

late family farmers, organized to seek common objectives, and accustomed to political activity, render it impossible for the native government of Denmark to be other than democratic. When their land has been freed from German domination, these family farmers doubtless will again, as many times in the past, restore prosperity for themselves and for their Nation.



Books

THE T.V.A.: LESSONS FOR INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION. By HERMAN FINER. International Labour Office. Montreal, Canada, 289 pages.

"THE VITAL question, to which the Tennessee Valley Authority attempts an answer, is whether an industrious and capable people, though settled in a region which contains substantial natural resources, must continue to endure a low living standard." In the light of this objective, the author portrays the work of T. V. A. and its international possibilities.

Views of public men and proposals for developmental "authorities" in various parts of the world are given as evidence of international interest in T. V. A., established by Congress in 1933, at a time of economic distress "when governments were taking the desperate course of restricting production and destroying produce in the hope of restoring economic welfare." The T. V. A. "represented an altogether different conception . . . : that of enterprise on a large scale, deliberately undertaken by the public authorities, . . .

an economic policy of hope and expansion . . ." That the implementation of this concept is a proper function of Government, he supports on the ground of broad social objectives, and on the authority of time-honored doctrine—Adam Smith's "third duty" of the sovereign:

" . . . the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the interest of any individual or small number of individuals to erect and maintain; because the profit could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society."—*The Wealth of Nations*, Book IV, Chapter IX.

The preface gives the author's favorable conclusions on T. V. A. itself. The reader is not left in doubt as to where the book will lead in

reference to the application of the T. V. A. principle "in lands of undeveloped economy, aided where necessary by an international body." The author finds that T. V. A. has set a high example of administrative organization and procedure.

All but one of the 14 chapters deal with the T. V. A. itself—the factors that led to its establishment, the making and sale of electric power, flood control, land use, organization and operation, personnel management, Federal and State relationships, labor policy, financing, and other topics. The last chapter, "The Problem of an International T. V. A.," is definitely international in contents. The Appendices include statistical tables, data on mineral resources, costs and profits, interstate compacts and the T. V. A. Act.

The first 13 chapters contain much useful information for anyone who would acquire a general view of T. V. A. and its work. The material, presented by an avowed friend of T. V. A., gives the distinct impression of a competent, fair-minded appraisal of the numerous activities by which this "multi-purpose" Authority pursued its task of integrated development of the Tennessee Valley comprising 40,600 square miles and including portions of seven States. The author emphasizes the advantage, to the Authority, of being able "to draw on the accumulated knowledge, experience and educated personnel of public and private enterprise and all the institutions of research and training."

EMPHASIZING the difficulty of specific evaluation of the economic and social results of T. V. A., the author proceeds with surefooted cau-

tion in applying his findings to the international field, recognizing that "no demonstration model can be regarded as suitable for adoption in every identical feature by other countries, or even in other areas of the same country, . . . The T. V. A. is not transplantable without reservations and qualifications; its characteristics merely help to bring out the problems and to suggest alternative solutions." He suggests possibilities for integrated developmental work in other countries under international auspices.

An area of development, he insists, not necessarily confined to particular "valleys", must be surveyed to determine its resources, "the key to the character of the area," for "the problem involved is the relationship between such a region and the national or world economy of which it is a part." Specific planning in the sense of both engineering and social science, is strongly urged, with a clear showing of the responsibility of each participating country.

In applying these notes of caution to international "development authorities," their social service objectives, financing, organization, etc., the author offers, in this reviewer's opinion, a significant contribution. Nowhere does the author advance "T. V. A." as a panacea for social and economic ills or as a means of crowding private enterprise into the background. On the contrary, he sees in such developmental work an enlarged opportunity for private enterprise through "public supplements to private investment," expansion of employment and business activity, and international collaboration on common problems of development.

—Eric Englund

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF WORLD AGRICULTURE. By KARL BRANDT.
W. W. Norton and Co., Inc. New York. 416 pages.

READERS will naturally expect to find in this book a program for postwar agricultural reconstruction throughout the world. Some specific proposals for the future are offered, but the chief value of the book probably lies in the competent summarization and appraisal of a vast store of information on agricultural trends, beginning with World War I, drawn from the author's rich background of experience in this province, and from many other sources, notably the Food Research Institute and the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Dr. Brandt, who was director of the German Institute of Agricultural Market Research and a member of the staff of the University of Berlin until he began his academic work in the United States some 13 years ago, believes that the condition of European agriculture itself when the shooting is over will not be nearly so much impaired as is popularly supposed, and he cites many reasons for this belief. He thinks that recovery of production will be somewhat delayed because of the destruction of factories that turn out farm tools and machinery and the deterioration of transportation, and he recognizes the danger of internal strife in countries torn by war. But he believes that:

"Nothing could be more advisable for those who have to shape the production and export policy for American agriculture during the postwar years than to ascertain with a candid eye what the actual condition of European agriculture is, and what

will be its prospective output of specific commodities as soon as the Continent is thrown open for such *prima facie* investigation."

Easing trade barriers to achieve "the beneficial effects of international trade on the basis of comparative advantage and competitive price" is a keystone in the reconstruction as outlined by the author. Apparently he believes that the "sealed compartments" imposed upon agriculture by the widespread restrictions on trade in the period between the two wars were more detrimental to agricultural prosperity than the direct destruction and depletion through war will be.

Naturally the attention of both author and reader concentrates frequently upon Central Europe. This is the area of Dr. Brandt's specialization, and he is forthright in stating his views regarding many matters of economic import there. They include the landed estates and their political implications, reparations in kind, "de-industrialization" of Germany, the "indefatigable politician in the cloak of a banker"—Dr. Schacht, economic nationalism, Nazi policies in regard to food and agriculture, and World War II in the German storm center. The incidental defects in assertion or reasoning are readily overlooked in view of the forthrightness of the author's statement on controversial themes, and the value of his summarization of much material of immediate and future interest.

—Eric Englund

WHEN WE'RE GREEN WE GROW. By *JANE SIMPSON McKIMMON*.
The University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill. 353 pages.

THIS story of home demonstration work in North Carolina does a job which has needed to be done. Easy to read and accurate in detail, the book tells of the establishment and development of a type of adult education for rural women which has steadily grown in size and in scope for more than 30 years.

Mrs. McKimmon is well fitted to tell this story, in both experience and ability. One of the first women appointed as home demonstration worker, she has taken part in its development from the first early tomato and canning clubs to the present home demonstration clubs with their comprehensive programs on everything touching the welfare of the home and the community. During the years, she was at the helm in North Carolina she lived the experiences of her agents as they undertook a new line of work or overcame some new obstacle to better living in rural homes.

IT is really the rural women themselves who tell the story and Mrs. McKimmon who reports it. Through the years she has collected a wealth of stories of what women and girls have accomplished when given some encouragement and help through their home demonstration agent. These women speak through the pages of the book—they tell of their problems and how they found a way to meet them—by getting a milk goat so the family could have the milk so much needed by some member of the family, by making a little extra money for needed repairs or wanted beauty through

selling on the home demonstration market, by finding ways to satisfy their economic, social, and spiritual needs.

The feeling which Mrs. McKimmon has for the rural women of her State permeates every chapter. She is sensitive to the difficulties of their lives and has thought more of their problems than of trying to teach any particular thing. Each new demonstration added to an agent's program was the result of some need forcefully brought to her attention through her close association with rural homes. To meet the needs, the intensive canning program developed into a home food-supply demonstration with the garden, the cow, and the hen entering the picture. The women wanted to be better dressed, wanted training that would make them at home in a city group, wanted more convenient and beautiful homes; they wanted books and libraries, recreational opportunities for their children, and many more things.

CERTAIN chapters are devoted to the first World War, to the depression, and to the development of home demonstration work among North Carolina's Negro women and girls.

Though not a complete history of the home demonstration movement, Mrs. McKimmon has done what she set out to do—"write this human story of farm women and girls in action"—and it is a valuable contribution to the literature of a movement which has enrolled nearly a million and half rural women.

—Clara Bailey

I SPEAK FOR JOE DOAKES: FOR COOPERATION AT HOME AND AMONG NATIONS. By ROY F. BERGENGREN. Harper & Brothers, New York. 167 pages.

COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES AT WORK. By HENRIK F. INFELD. The Dryden Press, New York. 201 pages.

HERE are two books which utilize the cooperative theme, though in different vein. Mr. Bergengren, making the case for Joe Doakes, the inarticulate common man, pleads urgently for more cooperation in America and among nations to safeguard democracy and make it work. Dr. Infeld records the history of cooperative farm communities here and abroad, and appraises them as they may provide patterns for postwar resettlement schemes. Hence, the two books are quite different in character and content.

Mr. Bergengren has been managing director of the Credit Union National Association for many years, working closely with the folks who fall in the category of the "common people." He draws on this experience to size up the potentialities of the cooperative technique in improving the economic position of the many Joe Doakeses of the world. He writes simply but effectively in everyday language, utilizing short snappy sentences and paragraphs.

In these words he voices his fears for the future—fears grounded on developments after World War I: "In the great surge of relief that the war is over will come forgetfulness of our one and only objective"—permanent world peace. "To win a war and then to waste the fruit of victory—that is defeat indeed." He holds out no hopes for a *perfect* world organization, citing the experiences of America's union of States in law-making: "Some of these laws

will be good and some will seem irksome and some will be silly," and yet constitutional government survives.

This author is convinced that "we must change our thinking about economics if we would assure peace." He urges cooperation because it "makes for a spread . . . while capitalism makes for the consolidation of wealth." He is critical of rugged individualism—capitalism without adequate competition from some other economic system—as the sort of thing which creates the myth of a master race. His concept of a sound economic structure is "a reformed capitalism dedicated to the service of man, in fair competition with a rapidly developing and efficient cooperative system . . . with government the disinterested third party . . ."

In supporting his case for cooperation as the tool of the common man, Mr. Bergengren cites the effective role of the credit union in driving out usurious money lending with its system of cooperative credit. He calls attention to the progress of cooperative purchasing associations. Readers may wonder why no mention is made of cooperative marketing as well.

The book is a worth-while addition to the bumper crop of current literature dealing with economic planning for the post-war period, although in it no emphasis is given to planning as such. It does do something which is lacking or given little

space in the other current books—it offers cooperation as a tried technique useful to the Joe Doakes of the world.

Dr. Infield, author of *Cooperative Communities at Work*, is executive director of the Rural Settlement Institute, and has had intimate knowledge of and close touch with cooperative settlements where productive activities are carried on cooperatively, jobs being parceled out by a manager or operating committee, minimum living costs being assured by the community, and profits of the enterprises being distributed among members, usually on some differential basis. He classifies the motivating forces as either religious or socio-reformistic. Many of the latter type—the Mexican *Ejidat*, the Soviet *Kolkhovy*, the Palestine *Kvutnot*—have developed under government sponsorship or encouragement. He also discusses settlements that are under the direction of the Farm Security Administration.

He sees ahead in the postwar world a serious problem of resettling and rehabilitating veterans and war refugees. Does the cooperative community offer a way out for many of them or for even the carefully selected few? This is the question he poses for himself. He approaches

his subject sympathetically—perhaps too much so, in the opinion of some readers. He analyzes his subject largely in sociological terms—an approach which makes his book definitely on the heavy side for lay readers. Nevertheless, it should be required reading for those who are playing with the idea of cooperative communities. His comprehensive review of the settlement projects of the past and present should bring some degree of realism into the readers' thinking—and perhaps temper their enthusiasm.

Anticipating the possible necessity of controlled mass relocation of groups of people, the author devotes the closing chapters to problems of administrative planning for resettlement communities. Such matters as administrative organization and the financing and supervision of projects are outlined, giving consideration to lessons learned from past successes and failures. Some readers may question seriously whether experiences to date full justify the author's apparent conclusions as to possibilities. In any case, the descriptive portions of the book are informative, and can provide useful background for those concerned with the welfare of underprivileged groups.

—Harold Hedges

And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

—Lev. 25, 23

COUNTRY PLANNING; A STUDY OF RURAL PROBLEMS. By AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS RESEARCH INSTITUTE, Oxford. Oxford University Press. London. 288 pages. (Maps, photographs, and charts.)

IF AGRICULTURAL reconstruction is to take place on a sound basis, information is needed that will throw light upon the social phases of rural life and labor, as well as the economic. On this hypothesis, strikingly similar to that frequently enunciated by State planning boards in the United States, a pilot survey was made by Oxford University's Agricultural Economics Research Institute of the economic and social conditions in a rural area in the Midlands of England. This book presents a summary of the findings, including consideration of agricultural efficiency, housing, rural administration, education, health, and recreation.

The facts are convincing evidence that the problems of British agriculture are closely interrelated to the problems of the Nation. There has been since 1881 a steady decline of population in the survey area and a shift of farm workers from agriculture to industry in adjacent districts. Many rural industries have succumbed as a result of farm mechanization and urban competition. Participation in the rural government and social activities is largely by the older people. The young folks in the smaller villages lack leadership, and those who have gone to school in a nearby town, or who commute to jobs in the industrial centers, find the local matters of little interest. Agriculture accounts for less than 31 percent of the employed population.

The problem of making the countryside into a healthy and prosperous part of the social and economic life

involves the coordination of village and industrial planning, and development of an agricultural industry in which the real incomes of workers will provide improved rural living standards.

Among the bulk of urban people a standard of living has been established which agriculture, as now organized, cannot offer. There are only two ways, the survey suggests, by which the difference can be adjusted. The first involves a program for more economic production, such as enlarging the size and improving the lay-out of fields and farms, making possible greater and more efficient use of machinery, producing products which the population needs most and which the country is best fitted by soil and climate to produce. The authors believe that the financial, educational, and other problems involved in such a plan can be solved.

The second alternative is government subsidies to farm labor, direct or indirect, which according to the survey committee might stabilize farm-labor numbers but could not be expected to reconstitute the country society satisfactorily.

The greatest problem in the area, apparently, is the impoverishment and stagnation of life in the villages. As a solution the report suggests that new or decentralized lighter industries might be established in the rural districts so that villages within the radius of an industry would supply the workers. Some of the smaller villages should be allowed to pass out of existence as centers of social

activity, but the larger ones would contain, in addition to farm families, residents employed in nonagricultural pursuits. Thus the population numbers would justify improvements in public services and could support the recreational and other organizations that are essential to a socially healthy community.

The report suggests that the influx of industry would have a profoundly beneficial effect on the agricultural economy. A great expansion would be expected in the demand for fresh dairy products, meat, eggs and poultry, vegetables and fruit. "Farmers and farm workers in many districts, who are restricted, now, to extensive systems of husbandry, based on corn [wheat] production in competition

with the cheap producers of all the world, would find themselves on the threshold of a new era of opportunity and advancement as the market in more profitable products, protected naturally, many of them, by their perishability, opened up around them."

The results of the survey and the suggestions for improvement of rural life are well organized. Besides making an inevitable appeal to a wide group of readers in the fields of social and economic relations, the study comes to close grips with the problem of the role which agriculture will be called upon to play in post-war British economy.

—Montell Ogdon

TOWN MEETING COUNTRY. By CLARENCE M. WEBSTER. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. New York. 246 pages. (American Folkways series.)

THIS STUDY of a typically New England form of community government was made in a hilly little region that includes roughly the eastern quarter of Connecticut, the western third of Rhode Island, and a bit of Massachusetts to the north. The material which the author has skillfully brought together shows that in this corner of New England the town meeting had adapted itself to the changes of three hundred years and is still a vital force.

When the first white settlers came through the forests from Puritan Massachusetts they started their new homes on much the same general plan as the old. In each settlement the properly God-fearing and law-abiding met frequently to discuss and decide affairs of common inter-

est, from the allotment of land to the regulation of church attendance. They chose selectmen to whom they entrusted such duties as preserving order, admonishing and punishing offenders, dispensing charity, and administering the funds the town meeting voted for the common welfare and protection. Apparently they believed the functions of this local government were to protect individuals in their just efforts to get on in their new surroundings, to maintain the religious, moral, and social standards of the majority, and to see that each bore his due share of responsibility and cost.

Almost trackless forests between the settlements and the centers of colonial administration left the settlements free from interference in

local affairs, and threw them on their own resources for defense against their Indian neighbors. Later they united in protective action throughout the region—a story that includes some of the most thrilling incidents of Indian warfare in New England. Mr. Webster, a descendant of original settlers, has evidently enjoyed digging into little-known records and folklore, and his chapters on the early history are fascinating reading. He makes it clear how the early ideas of personal independence, ambition, and a sense of sharing the responsibilities of the community have combined with the physical characteristics of the country to produce the life we see there today.

Economically the area, except for the city of New London, is now a bit of a backwater. The nature of the land rules out large-scale agriculture. Fisheries and boat-building along the Sound have mostly disappeared. The granite quarries are no longer very important. Small factories along the streams have tended to peter out.

But the social life is not stagnant. The people are up-to-date in their concern for education, for farm, community, and home improvements,

for State and national political issues. At the same time they maintain their love of personal and community independence and of neighborly control of whatever militates against their idea of the good way of life. This last shows in their tolerant but not too receptive attitude toward the city families who are attracted to the country by its natural beauty and old-time charm.

Though the complexities of modern life have made it necessary to turn over some of the functions of the town meeting to special officers, the meeting is still held at least once a year and is the scene of genuinely democratic discussion and action on plans for community, welfare, progress, and expenditure.

As this brief review is written, the newspapers are full of the chaotic breakdown of local government in Germany. More than ever we realize what such traditions as those of the town meeting mean to democracy and we are grateful for this timely description of the way in which it exemplifies "the basic principles of just and democratic government."

—Helen W. Atwater

Agriculture seems to possess an incontestable right to the title of parent and nurse of all other professions. Observe a country where agriculture flourishes, and you will behold arts and sciences flourish in equal perfection.

—SOCRATES

NAMES ON THE LAND: AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF PLACE NAMING IN THE UNITED STATES. By GEORGE R. STEWART. Random House. New York. 418 pages.

PLACE NAMES are so closely interwoven into our language, our traditions, and our ways of thought as to usually go unnoticed. We do on occasion ask some question about a particular name, but as a rule the names of our bays and capes and islands and creeks and rivers and mountains, the names of our small towns and cities and counties and States, of our roads and streets and ranches and plantations are words or names which come so easily to mind as to seem natural.

Stewart's *Names on the Land* is an endeavor to examine these several million place names which we so easily accept and give an account of their historical growth. This approach has one great advantage: it allows the author to show clearly that American place names are closely correlated with the four centuries of American history stretching from the first European naming in 1513 to some time after 1900, that our place names not only sum up the names and events which we all accept as memorable but also much of the culture and background of the common people who did most to create and maintain the Nation itself.

Stewart's goal seems to have been a popular book and this choice also dictated the historical approach. The author's endeavor to summarize the great mass of scientific and semi-scientific material relating to American place names could, of course, have been organized around some other approach. Some readers certainly will wish that several chapters could have been devoted to the discussion of the derivation and classification of place names along non-historical lines, even though a fair approach to such a generalized discussion is supplied by supplementary sentences and sections scattered throughout the text.

But the author started out to write an historical account of place naming in the United States and once well started, the book is interesting reading indeed. The reviewer recommends it to those who are interested in the American tradition and its background, or in derivations, or the way in which the great stream of American place names gradually became both more and less English, or in obtaining some basis of separating fact from fiction as they listen to local stories about this name or that.

—O. V. Wells

Today as we move against the terrible scourge of war—as we go forward toward the greatest contribution that any generation of human beings can make in this world—the contribution of lasting peace, I ask you to keep up your faith. I measure the sound, solid achievement that can be made at this time by the straight edge of your own confidence and your resolve. And to you, and to all Americans who dedicate themselves with us to the making of an abiding peace, I say:

The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith.

—FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

In April 1945

